

To: Federal Communications Commission

I would like you to consider the following comments to the FCC's "Notice of Proposed Rulemaking" 05-311 on "video franchising". I believe it is critical in these times that local citizens and communities have a way to keep telecommunications companies accountable to the citizens in their communities. Without local franchises local communities will be stripped of an adequate way to make sure companies charge reasonable rates, respond to customer complaints, or that they provide universal service.

PEG and local public access centers are the only means by which individuals and non-profit organizations can freely or affordably access the tools and training to produce their own programming and to express their own point-of-view through the media.

Local franchises are also cornerstone in the operation of Public Television, which provides the important service of supporting local views and content in the media, and the making and airing of programs that reflect the diversity of American life. Public television is very important in providing a place where all of us can stay informed about local government affairs; and where individuals and community organizations can express their viewpoints and opinions. Democracy works best when the widest range of ideas possible is made available to all people, and public television plays an important role in doing this.

As a supporter of Public Access television in Houston, Texas (KUHT-TV), KPFT Radio, KUHF Radio, I strongly urge the FCC to rule for the maintenance of local franchises.

The concentration of power and access to the airwaves is already far too concentrated in two few hands for me to believe that we are getting a wide diversity of viewpoints, stories, facts and opinions on topics of importance to everyone in this country. I am frightened that the current trend toward media concentration, and the control of information that it makes possible. In fact, when I travel, I watch CNN International, BBC and other stations and am amazed at what we are not being told in our own country by our own media.

Regards
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